



REPUBLIC OF KENYA

**REMARKS BY HIS EXCELLENCY HON. DR.
WILLIAM SAMOEI RUTO, C.G.H. PRESIDENT OF
THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA AND COMMANDER-IN-
CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCES DURING THE
LAUNCH OF THE CLIMATEWORX PROGRAM**

SEPTEMBER 12, 2024

NAIROBI

1. It is a great honour to join you here today as we embark on an ambitious and transformative programme. This is the perfect time and place for this important initiative, and all of us gathered here constitute the perfect partnership to get the job done.
2. The memories of the longest and harshest droughts on record, followed by devastating floods, remain fresh in our minds. These extreme climate events have made us fully aware of the severe impacts of climate change.
3. The whole world is in the grip of a triple planetary crisis, and Kenya is no exception. In fact, like other parts of our continent and the world, we are at the epicentre, with this crisis worsened by limited resources and widespread poverty affecting millions of our people.
4. The challenge of developing climate resilience is extremely urgent and, as you can see here for yourselves, the most adverse consequences of the intersection of pollution, loss of biodiversity and climate change manifest most intensely within spaces that serve vulnerable communities.
5. Today, the Nairobi River, which is clean and fresh at its source, is polluted, darkened, and foul-smelling poisoned with industrial effluent, untreated sewage and plastic waste. All around it, the damaging effects of environmental degradation are evident. These issues undermine the livability of communities housing hundreds of thousands of people and pose serious threats to health and quality of life.



6. We are therefore here to witness the effects of climate change and pollution on the environment, as well as their impact on human well-being. At the same time, we are here to affirm the possibility of transforming this undesirable situation through effective partnerships, inclusive and impactful remedial endeavour and the integration of young people into the national climate action agenda.
7. By launching the National Climate Resilience Programme, ClimateWorX, we take our first and immensely significant step to radically turn around this state of affairs by intentionally building climate resilience, restoring our natural ecosystems and creating opportunities for our youth.
8. ClimateWorX is a powerful, inclusive, and transformative intervention aimed at achieving ecological restoration, while maintaining public infrastructure and housing, through labour-intensive and sustainable public works.
9. Given our recent experience of destructive flooding, the urgency of focusing resolute interventions on riverine areas to mitigate flood risks cannot be understated. It is also our opportunity to make good our commitment to improve safety in settlements within the Nairobi River Basin. To accomplish these critical tasks, we are expanding the mandate of the Nairobi Rivers Commission to include the development of sustainable urban spaces.
10. In recognition of the urgency, intensity and importance of the work ahead, ClimateWorX is ambitious by design. It aims to employ 200,000 young men and women from every part of Kenya in the development of critical infrastructure and environmental projects within their communities.



11. Additionally, this initiative offers an opportunity and a gateway for our youth to join a movement that harnesses their potential to enhance the livability of our cities and neighbourhoods while directly addressing the challenges of climate change. ClimateWorX will focus on youth empowerment and their active involvement in improving infrastructure, including social housing, constructing footbridges and access roads, and creating essential physical and social amenities. It will also engage them in environmental stewardship, urban cleanliness, green space development, tree planting, and transforming the areas surrounding our rivers.
12. Our vision for ClimateWorX is to activate talent and capability in community service, entrepreneurship, employment, and further education. ClimateWorX will be a platform where diverse skills and competencies are applied to climate action and community transformation, while also fostering personal growth and alignment with emerging opportunities.
13. Our aim is to eliminate the illegal dumping of solid waste and discharge of effluent in urban areas, make communities resilient to the adverse effects of climate change, and build sustainable neighbourhoods. ClimateWorX will achieve this while creating jobs, uplifting the youth, and empowering them to lead Kenya's transformation through climate resilience, ecological stewardship, and shaping new opportunities through knowledge, innovation, and entrepreneurship.
14. To achieve this vital goal, the cooperation and commitment of all stakeholders is crucial. I direct all responsible agencies to fully enforce waste management laws, without exception, to protect our rivers and surrounding environment in line with our constitutional duty to safeguard these resources for present and future generations.



15. The initial phase of ClimateWorX will begin here in Nairobi County, along the Nairobi River. We aim to complement and expand the commendable work already being done by Komb Green Youths, in partnership with the National Environmental Management Authority, which has established a green park. Their success will serve as a model for community-led initiatives that we intend to replicate through ClimateWorX.
16. The first phase of ClimateWorX in Nairobi County will officially begin on October 1, 2024, with 20,000 young people being onboarded. Building on this foundation, we will extend the program to the four major cities—Kisumu, Mombasa, Eldoret, and Nakuru—within the month. An additional 40,098 youth will be engaged, with 10,000 of them allocated to other areas of Nairobi starting in early November. In December, we will roll out ClimateWorX across all remaining counties, onboarding 139,902 youth to ensure full national participation and impact.
17. I encourage young people to be part of making Kenya's cities, urban spaces and neighbourhoods liveable, smart, green and sustainable by applying for ClimateWorX through www.crsp.go.ke.
18. I recognise and thank our many partners whose contributions have made ClimateWorX a reality, including Public Space Network, Chemolex and Muungano wa Wanavijiji. Your commendable efforts have brought a noble vision to life and made it possible to restore not only the Nairobi River but also the beauty of Kenya and the safety and dignity of our communities. Certainly, you are an indelible part of Kenya's climate action and socio-economic transformation. I invite our private sector to join other citizens in driving this programme forward, and our development partners to walk this historic journey with us.



19. Let us all stand together and work with one accord and, through ClimateWorX, deliver urgently needed solutions and resources to support our fight against climate change.

Thank you.

